

Don't Touch Me by BlueRoanSky

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Summary:

Steve frowns. It's dark out by the quarry, but the moon is bright enough to show the shadow of a bruise on Billy's cheek. "Another fight?"

Billy grins—all teeth—and turns his face away. "Sure." Before Steve can inquire further, Billy says, "What brings King Steve out here all by himself?"

"Nothing," Steve says, allowing the subject change for now. "Regular Steve was just looking for some quiet."

Don't Touch Me

Author's Note:

And I'm back at it again with yet another show. My apologies to those who have been waiting for the next chapter of my multi-chaptered Supernatural fic. Writer's block hit me like a train with that story, so I promise I'll update as soon as I can. :-.

As for this story, it's not a full story, technically, but it's also not really a multi-chaptered fic. So, I figured I'd make a series for one-shots that are connected and might end up reading like a complete story eventually.

I hope you enjoy!

Dinnertime at Billy's house is always an uncertain affair. Sometimes, it's almost like dinner with a normal family—at least so far as Billy can tell. They talk, they eat, they even laugh sometimes. Afterward, Max will help Susan clean the dishes, and Billy will slink off to his room before he fucks everything up somehow.

But, other times, it ends with Billy shoved up against a wall.

He's not even sure what Neil is growling about because his ears are ringing from his head's harsh hit to the wall and Neil's harsh hit to his face. He doubles over from the punch to his stomach and barely manages to catch himself when Neil throws him to the floor by his hair.

It's a mercy when his father finally walks away.

Billy stumbles to his feet and almost falls over again when the room spins around him. The ache in his stomach muscles is nothing compared to his pounding head and throbbing cheek, but he still wraps an arm around his waist as he staggers to his room with his other hand on the wall for balance. He has to pause for a moment to fight a wave of nausea, and then, he reaches behind his bed for the

small container of pain pills he swiped from the bathroom a while ago.

He dumps a pile of them into his hand and stares. How many would it take to kill him? They're painkillers. They're supposed to end the pain. Downing a bottle of pills would definitely bring an end to the pain.

He squeezes his eyes shut against the intensifying throbbing behind his eyes and drops most of the pills back in the bottle. He swallows four of them dry, swipes his keys from his sorry excuse for a dresser, and unsteadily makes his way out to his car. He's pretty sure that he shouldn't drive, but he's definitely sure that he doesn't care.

Halfway to the quarry and driving too fast, he slams on the brakes and skids to a stop, half-falling out of his car seconds before his stomach heaves up the small amount of dinner he managed to eat. He spits on the asphalt and drags himself to his feet with the help of his car door. Wiping his mouth with the back of his hand, he shifts the Camaro into gear and drives.

#

The roar of the Camaro's engine is Steve's only warning that Billy is arriving. He turns from where he's sat on the hood of his car to watch the approach of the Camaro—blue in the light of day, but almost black at night. It pulls up just behind and to the left of Steve's car and shuts off almost immediately. Steve inhales deeply as the Camaro's driver's side door opens and Billy steps out.

"Harrington," Billy says, his words slightly slurred, "what're you doing out so late?"

"It's only nine, Hargrove," Steve says. "You drunk?"

Billy sidles up, stopping just shy of the Beamer. "Nah," he says. "Wish, though."

Steve frowns. It's dark out by the quarry, but the moon is bright enough to show the shadow of a bruise on Billy's cheek. "Another fight?"

Billy grins—all teeth—and turns his face away. “Sure.” Before Steve can inquire further, Billy says, “What brings King Steve out here all by himself?”

“Nothing,” Steve says, allowing the subject change for now. “Regular Steve was just looking for some quiet.”

Billy pulls a cigarette from his pocket and lights it. “Not quiet enough at home?”

Steve shrugs. The water of the quarry is dark, but the moonlight glistening on its surface is a pretty sight. “Not the right kind of quiet, I guess.” They’re silent for a few moments, until Billy shoves the pack of cigarettes in Steve’s face. Steve flinches, then raises an eyebrow. “A peace offering?”

Billy doesn’t look at him. “Take it or leave it, Harrington.”

Steve hesitates, then takes a cigarette from the carton. He lights it with his own lighter that’s always stashed in his pockets nowadays (never quite know when fire will come in handy) and closes his eyes as he inhales the smoke. He holds it in his lungs as long as he can before exhaling it in a rush.

“You make smoking look like sex,” Billy says, and Steve can’t help the laugh that bursts out of him.

“Don’t cream your pants,” is all he can think to say without being too revealing.

Billy says, “Too late,” but when Steve glances at him, the half-smile on his face is joking and only partly-strained.

Steve reaches out to give Billy a friendly shove on the shoulder, but Billy skitters out of reach. Steve frowns, but doesn’t comment, and they fall into a strangely-companionable silence.

When his cigarette finally burns out, Steve hops off the hood of his car. “I should probably get home. Told the nerds I’d pick them up early tomorrow for the arcade.”

“Probably see you there, then,” Billy says, flicking his cigarette butt

away.

“Yeah, okay,” Steve says.

It’s weird—interacting with Billy like they’re just two normal people. Billy’s eyes meet his for a moment—as dark as his Camaro at night—and then, Billy turns without a word and gets back into his car.

Steve only has time to raise a hand in farewell before Billy drives off.

#

When Billy opens his eyes, the rays of the morning sun filter through his bedroom window like daggers. He throws an arm over his face, suppresses a groan at the throb of the bruise on his cheek and the renewed pounding in his head, and contemplates the benefits of being dead. He isn’t allowed that luxury for long before Neil’s fist thumps against his door—each hard knock like a spike into Billy’s ears.

“Time to get your lazy ass up and drive your sister to the arcade,” Neil says through the door.

Only so his father won’t come in, Billy says, “Yeah, I’m up.” He waits until Neil’s footsteps fade down the hall before pushing himself into a sitting position. His head spins even with his eyes closed, and when he finally forces them to open, it’s like shoving hot coals through his eye sockets and into his brain. “Fuck,” he says, under his breath.

Standing adds a whole new level of difficulty to existing when his vision swims and his stomach roils. He almost vomits right then and there, but manages to hold it back through sheer willpower. Moving as carefully as he can, he puts clean clothes on and snatches his sunglasses from where they sit in front of his mirror. He avoids looking at himself and leaves the room with only slightly unsteady steps.

He finds Neil, Susan, and Max in the kitchen finishing their breakfast. Susan glances at him with a guilty expression that she hides behind an uncertain smile.

“Good morning, Billy,” she says. “I, um, think there’s some eggs and

bacon left...?"

Billy glances at his father, whose jaw is set. "I appreciate it, Susan," Billy says, plastering a smile on his face. "I'm not very hungry this morning, though."

"If he were, he would've been up in time for breakfast," Neil says. "Right, Billy?"

Billy only meets his father's eyes for a second. "Yes, sir."

"May I be excused?" Max asks, as though oblivious to the tension.

Susan glances at Neil when she says, "Of course, hun. Just put your plate in the sink."

Billy stays still—hardly breathing—while he waits. Neil scrutinizes Billy's every move, looks for excuses to get up in his face about *respect and responsibility*, and he can't take another hit to the head right now. When Max finally flounces past him and toward the front door, Billy says, "Thank you for breakfast, Susan."

Her smile is thin. "You're welcome, Billy."

"I expect Max home at a decent time," Neil says, eyes hard.

Billy says, "Yes, sir," and tries not to look like he's running away when he follows Max to the door. Once outside, he sags against the house and digs his palms into his eyes despite the increased pain. He flinches at a soft touch on his arm and lowers his hands.

"You okay?" Max asks, her voice uncharacteristically quiet.

"Course," Billy says, sliding his sunglasses on. They only partially dull the stabbing sensation of the sunlight, but that's better than nothing. "Let's just fucking go."

#

By the time Steve pulls up in front of the arcade with his gaggle of nerds, Billy's Camaro is already there, with Billy himself laying on the hood and smoking. Steve shoos the kids into the arcade and tries

to look casual when he meanders over to Billy, whose eyes are hidden behind dark sunglasses.

“Not a morning person, Hargrove?”

Billy sits up with a grimace that’s there and gone. “Not much of a person-person, either.”

“Obviously,” Steve says. In the daylight, the bruise on Billy’s cheek looks dark and painful.

The arcade door bangs open, and Billy winces.

“Steve!” Dustin says, loud as usual. “Hey, Steve! We need more money for the arcade. Mad Max keeps beating *all* our scores, and we can’t let a *girl* beat us, Steve. We just *can’t*.”

“Here.” Steve shoves a twenty-dollar bill into Dustin’s hands just to shut him up. “Stop shouting at me.”

“Thanks, Steve!” Dustin says with a grin, and rushes back into the arcade.

Steve looks back over at Billy, who’s cradling his head in his hands. “You good, Hargrove?”

“Peachy,” Billy says without moving.

Steve shifts from one foot to the other. “The nerds will probably be here for a while. You wanna go somewhere?”

Billy finally lifts his head, raising an eyebrow. “Go where?”

Steve shrugs. “I dunno. Somewhere quieter and outta the sun.”

Billy’s expression is difficult to read with the sunglasses on, but he slides off the hood of his Camaro after a few moments. “Yeah, okay,” he says—an imitation of Steve’s words from the night before.

“Cool,” Steve says. “I’ll drive.”

#

Billy doesn't ask where Steve's taking them because he frankly doesn't care. The sunlight and the noise are hell on his probable concussion, and the longer he spends outside, the more his stomach threatens to try and empty itself again. He keeps his eyes closed in the car, relishing the cool breeze of the air conditioner and the lack of noise other than the quiet engine.

It isn't long before the car pulls to a stop. Billy opens his eyes and frowns. "Where the fuck?"

"My house," Steve says. "Problem?"

Billy shakes his head and immediately regrets it when the sensation of nails being driven through his skull returns with a vengeance. He squeezes his eyes shut until the pain subsides to manageable levels. When he opens them again, Steve's watching him. "Like what you see, Princess?" Billy asks.

Steve's lips press together. "Yeah, you in obvious pain really gets me going." He opens his door. "There's ice inside."

Billy follows him into the house. "I'd prefer painkillers and alcohol."

"Nice try," Steve says, leading him into the kitchen.

With all the blinds closed, the house is dimly-lit. Steve doesn't turn any lights on, for which Billy is grateful—though he'll shoot himself before he admits it. He pulls his sunglasses off as he sits down on a chair at the kitchen table. "Nice place you got here, Harrington."

Unamused, Steve glances at him from where he's pulling ice from the freezer. "My parents care a lot about their job."

"That why they're not here on a Saturday?" Billy asks, accepting the bag of ice wrapped in a towel when Steve holds it out to him.

"Yep," Steve says. "They'll be gone another week at least."

Billy presses the ice to the side of his head, hissing at the pressure. "Must be nice."

Steve sits in the chair adjacent to Billy. "Speaking of parents," he

starts, and Billy tenses, keeping his gaze on where his fingernail digs into the tabletop. “How’s it having a stepmom? Max seems pretty adjusted.”

Billy pastes a smile on his face. “It’s fan-fucking-tastic, Harrington.” Steve doesn’t respond, and when Billy looks up, Steve’s eyebrows are furrowed.

“Can I ask you something?”

“I may not answer,” Billy says, “but ask aw—”

Steve’s hand shoots out, and Billy jerks back, the bag of ice dropping from his hand. But, Steve’s fingers barely brush Billy’s bruised cheek.

“Did this happen at home?” Steve asks, quiet and gentle.

Billy’s breath stutters in his chest, and he’s suddenly standing, fists clenched. “What the fuck, Harrington? That why you brought me here?”

Steve’s lips part as his eyes widen. “What? No, Hargrove, of course not—”

“Right,” Billy sneers. “Just looking for some fodder for the rumor mill.”

“Why would I—”

“What do I care?” Billy stalks toward the front door. “You can take your false concern and shove it up your ass, Harrington.”

“Wait,” Steve says, and his hand wraps around Billy’s arm.

Billy flinches and whirls around, yanking his arm from Steve’s grip. “Don’t *touch* me!”

Steve holds his hands up, palms facing Billy. “Okay, I’m sorry. I didn’t mean to upset you.”

“You didn’t think a question like *that* would upset me?” Billy curls his hands tighter until his nails bite into the skin of his palms.

Steve runs a hand through his hair. “No, I just—” He sighs. “Look, I really am sorry. Can we just...forget about it?”

Billy opens his mouth to respond when the room tilts. He doesn’t realize he’s falling until there are arms wrapping around his waist to steady him. He closes his eyes and lets his head fall forward to rest in the crook between Steve’s neck and shoulder. “Shit,” Billy says on an exhale.

“You should sit down,” Steve says, but he tightens his hold.

Billy inhales, pulling the scent of forest and spices and *Steve* deep into his lungs. He shudders at the thought of staying here—opening himself up to Steve and everything that would entail.

But.

He pushes away, stumbling backward on unsteady legs. Steve releases him immediately, and Billy misses the warmth, though all he says is, “We’ll just forget about it.” He locks his gaze with Steve’s. “All of it.”

Steve’s expression is...sad. But, he only says, “Yeah, okay.”